

# AGAINST THE SPANISH MATCH

George Abbot (1562–1633), Archbishop of Canterbury (1611–1633)

to James I (1566–1625), King of England (1603–1625) and Scotland (1567–1625)

March 1622/1623

I have been too long silent, and am afraid that by my silence I have neglected the duty of the place which it has pleased God to call me unto and Your Majesty to place me in. But now I humbly crave leave that I may discharge my conscience towards God and my duty towards Your Majesty and, therefore, I beseech you freely to give me leave to deliver myself, and then let Your Majesty do with me as you please.

Your Majesty has propounded a toleration of religion. I beseech you then to take into your consideration what your act is and what the consequence may be, for by it you labour to set up the most damnable and heretical doctrine of the Church of Rome, the Whore of Babylon. How hateful will it be to God and grievous to your good subjects, the professors of the Gospel, that Your Majesty, who has often disputed and learnedly written against these heresies, should now show yourself a patron of those wicked doctrines which your pen has often told the world and your conscience tells yourself are superstitious, idolatrous, and detestable.

And hereunto I add what you have done in sending the Prince into Spain, without the consent of your council, the privity and approbation of your people. Though you have a charge and interest in the Prince, as son of your flesh, yet have the people a greater, as son of the Kingdom. Upon what next after Your Majesty are their eyes fixed and welfare depends; and so tenderly is his going apprehended as (believe it), however his return may be safe, yet the drawers of him into this action, so dangerous to himself, so desperate to the Kingdom, will not pass away unquestioned if unpunished.

Besides, this toleration which you endeavour to set up by proclamation cannot be done without a Parliament, unless Your Majesty will let your subjects see that you will take unto yourself ability to throw down the laws of your land at your pleasure. What dreadful consequence these things may draw afterwards, I beseech Your Majesty to consider. And above all, lest by this toleration and discountenancing the true profession of the Gospel, wherewith God has blessed us and this Kingdom has so flourished under it, Your Majesty do not draw on this Kingdom in general, and yourself in particular, God's heavy wrath and indignation. Thus in discharge of my duty and towards God, to Your Majesty, and the place of my calling, I have taken humble leave to deliver my conscience.

“Miscellanies,” *The Anti-Jacobin Review and True Churchman's Magazine* 50 (January 1816):98. [modernized]